

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HURRICANES HARVEY AND IRMA

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, let me say that my heart goes out to the people of America who are, right now, dealing with Hurricanes Harvey and Irma and their aftermaths.

TRIBUTE TO STEVE GLEASON AND DONNA BRITT

Mr. President, ALS, which I think most of us refer to as Lou Gehrig's disease, has hit us hard in Louisiana. It has hit our world hard, but it has hit especially hard in my State.

A number of my colleagues and a number of Americans, I hope, were watching the night the New Orleans Saints returned to the field after our State was devastated by Hurricane Katrina. That night in the Superdome, a young man named Steve Gleason became a legend. I know it was just a football game, but he blocked a punt deep in the territory of the Saints' opponent, the Atlanta Falcons, for a touchdown. It was more than just a touchdown; it was a declaration that Louisiana was going to come back, that our spirit was not broken.

Today, Steve Gleason is battling ALS. The medical term for ALS is "amyotrophic lateral sclerosis." We call it, as I said, Lou Gehrig's disease. It is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that destroys nerve cells in the brain and in the spinal cord. Regrettably, there is no cure. Steve, however, is determined to thrive and help others who have ALS.

Within the past few weeks, we have also learned that another Louisianan has ALS—well-known Baton Rouge television news anchor Donna Britt. I will tell you, like Steve, Donna is showing true grit in the face of this horrible disease. Most of us would probably curl into a fetal position and cry if we were told we had a progressive neurodegenerative disease that is almost always fatal—but not Steve and certainly not Ms. Donna Britt. Their valor and their courage is inspirational to me and, I think, to all Louisianans. As Donna herself put it, she is going to continue living as a living person and not as a dying person.

There is a famous line in a famous movie in which the main character says: I have a choice here—it is time to get busy living or get busy dying. Donna has chosen to get busy living. She is going to keep going to work, and she is going to keep caring for her family. Donna is educating herself about ALS. She has ordered a state-of-the-art wheelchair with Bluetooth technology, and she is adding words to a voice bank for when she can no longer speak because of this horrible disease. Donna Britt—I am not surprised—is determined to meet every challenge.

Let me say it again. This is pure valor. It is the type of courage in the face of adversity that inspires us all. It

is also Donna. I do not know how to put that any other way. That is Donna Britt. Donna is a person who plays the oboe and who has survived breast cancer. She donates books to school libraries, and for charity she sings outside the Walmart during the holidays. She travels the world, and she delivers the news. She is a voice of comfort to all of those in her television media market, and she loves her family. She and her husband Mark Ballard have a son and a daughter. Her daughter Annie is a scientist working in DNA research, and their son Louie is a bright, young student in high school.

Donna has delivered the news in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area for 36 years. She spent her entire career, which is very unusual, at one television station—WAFB in Baton Rouge, which Donna has helped to make a powerhouse in Louisiana media. Donna has done her job so extraordinarily well that she has become a role model for young journalists—all journalists but particularly female journalists. I can tell my colleagues that folks in Baton Rouge feel Donna Britt is a part of their family. They trust her. That is because she is impartial, she is objective, and she is insightful. Since 1981, she has been on the air with the people of the Baton Rouge metropolitan area through storms, through inaugurations, through just about every major news event, good times and bad, that one can imagine. Donna also takes our people into the community and introduces them to interesting people.

A few months ago, Donna realized her health wasn't what it should be. There is no definitive test for ALS, as perhaps my colleagues know. Basically, the doctors have to rule everything else out before determining that one has ALS. As she struggled to figure out why she was losing the use of her fingers and her legs, Donna didn't keep her viewers in the dark. She brought them along for the journey in frank, candid Facebook videos. Along the way, she educated them—ever the journalist—on what it is like to have a degenerative disease.

At a family reunion this summer, Donna all of a sudden could not stand any longer. Now, that is a problem when you stand behind a desk to deliver the news—not for Donna. It was just another challenge to conquer. She promptly ordered a wheelchair that would adapt to her new reality.

Now Donna Britt is working with Louisiana State University to prepare for the day when her respiratory and diaphragm muscles are too weak for her to vocalize what she is thinking. With LSU's help, she is putting words into a voice bank for the future. Once again, it is just another challenge for Donna Britt to conquer.

I am very proud of Steve Gleason, and I am also very proud of Donna Britt. As angry as I am that anyone has to live with this dreadful disease ALS, I am proud they are inspiring an army of ALS sufferers by meeting

every challenge and battling to thrive. I am proud that Steve and Donna are inspiring all of us with their valor and their courage.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:05 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kevin Allen Hassett, of Massachusetts, to be Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 20 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, on the campaign trail, Donald Trump promised working families that he would subject every proposal he saw in the White House to a simple test: "Does it create more jobs and better wages for Americans?" He claimed he wasn't "going to let Wall Street get away with murder," and he said he was going to "drain the swamp."

Such great talk—and then he got to Washington. His first order of business was to put together a team of people who had spent decades as executives at big banks and large corporations—people who are determined to tilt the playing field in favor of Wall Street and against working families. You don't need to look very far to see them. His most senior economic advisers—Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn, and the senior counselor for economic initiatives, Dina Powell—together, those three have spent nearly a half a century combined working for Goldman Sachs. When it comes to our economy, this isn't the Trump administration; this is the Goldman Sachs administration.